

PROTOCOL FOR GRANTING PODIATRISTS  
MEDICAL STAFF PRIVILEGES

- According to the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Hospitals, medical staff membership shall be limited, unless provided by law, to individuals who are currently fully licensed to practice medicine and, in addition, to licensed dentists. Consequently, podiatrists may not be members of the medical staff.
- However, clinical privileges may be granted to podiatrists.
- Podiatrists shall be classified as specified health professionals.
- It is recommended that podiatrists be invited to attend medical staff meetings and committees although they may not vote.
- Hospitals which grant podiatrists clinical privileges must make specific reference to podiatric services in the medical staff bylaws, rules and regulations.
- Podiatrists must comply with all applicable medical staff bylaws, rules and regulations.
- The granting of clinical privileges must be based on documented training, experience and current competence.
- The request for privileges must be processed through the normal medical staff mechanism to the governing body, which shall have final approval.
- Podiatrists who are granted clinical privileges shall be assigned to an appropriate clinical department or service.
- The scope of privileges which may be granted should be commensurate with the level of sophistication or complexity of that particular hospital.
- When surgical privileges are granted, the scope and extent of privileges must be defined for each podiatrist; individually.
- Surgical privileges for podiatrists shall be recommended in the same manner as all other surgical privileges.
- Surgical procedures performed by podiatrists shall be under the supervision of the chief of orthopedic surgery, the chief of surgery (for hospitals which do not have a chief of orthopedic surgery), or the physician chairman of the operating room committee in hospitals that do not have a chief of surgery.
- When the operating/anesthesia team consists entirely of non-physicians (for example--nurse anesthetist with a podiatrist or dentist), a physician must be immediately available in case of emergency, such as cardiac arrhythmia or standstill.

- Admission of a podiatric patient shall be the dual responsibility of the responsible podiatrist and a physician member of the medical staff.
- Podiatrists with clinical privileges, may, under conditions defined in the medical staff by-laws, rules and regulations, and with the concurrence of a physician member of the medical staff, initiate the procedure for admitting or discharging a patient.
- It is required that the physician member(s) of the medical staff who will share the responsibility for podiatric patients be designated at the time clinical privileges are delineated for the individual podiatrists.
- Podiatrists may write orders and prescribe medications within the limits of their licensure and of the medical staff by-laws, rules and regulations.
- A physician who is either a member of the medical staff or approved by the medical staff to perform an admission history and physical must perform the same and record the findings in the patient's medical record.
- The physician member of the medical staff who "co-admits" a podiatric patient is responsible for any and all medical and non-podiatric surgical problems present on admission or those which arise during hospitalization.
- The physician member of the medical staff who "co-admits" a podiatric patient is responsible for evaluating the general medical status of the podiatric patient and shall ascertain the overall risk assessment and effect of the operation on the patient's health.
- The podiatrist must assume responsibility for recording that part of the patient's history and physical examination that relates to podiatry.
- It is the responsibility of the hospital to ensure that the appropriate supervision and evaluation of podiatric care occurs.
- It is the responsibility of the supervising physician (the chief of surgery or the chairman of the operating room committee) to provide the periodic evaluation for the purpose of recREDENTIALING of the performance of the podiatrist. The evaluation of the performance of the podiatrist should be based on operating room observation, record review, tissue review and medical care evaluation studies.